

## **General Context:**

### **Kingdom of Bahrain: General Profile:**

The Kingdom of Bahrain is an Arab Muslim independent country, fully sovereign, and its system of government is a constitutional monarch, as described in the Constitution and the special Royal Decree concerning the inheritance.

The system of government in the Kingdom of Bahrain is a democratic, sovereign of the people, the source of all authorities, and citizens, men and women, have the right to participate in public affairs and to enjoy political rights, including the right to vote and nomination.

The system of government rests on a separation of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities while maintaining cooperation between them in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Legislative authority is vested in the King and the National Assembly (represented by the Shoura, i.e. the selected, and the elected house of parliament) in accordance with the Constitution. Executive authority is vested in the King together with the Council of Ministers.

Believing in Shoura principle as the basis for ruling, therefore, both the House of the Shoura and elected House of Parliament have been established under Decree Law No. (15) of 2002, in accordance with the provisions of the internal regulations of each of the two houses. The task of the Shoura Council is to express an opinion and advice on the matters transferred by the Council of Ministers of the projects, general policy and the construction projects for economic and social development and any other things the Ministerial Council wants to take the opinion of the Shura Council thereon.

The Elected Parliament Council shall undertake the responsibility for the oversight and accountability of the executive power; and collectively work with the Shoura Council in issuing laws ratified by His Majesty the King. The legislative power in the Kingdom of Bahrain handled by each of the chambers in accordance with the principles of the National Action Charter ratified by an overwhelming majority of (98.4%), in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain issued on February 24, 2002.

## **Geography and Area:**

The Kingdom of Bahrain is an archipelago comprising of 40 islands, which is located centrally on the southern shores of the Arabian Gulf, between latitudes 32° 25° and 20° 26° north and longitudes 20° 50° and 50° 50° east, away from the east coast of Saudi Arabia at about 16 kilometers and 54 kilometers from the west coast of the peninsula of Qatar.

The total area of the Kingdom of Bahrain is (735,80) square kilometers; the largest island is Bahrain Island, where the capital city, Manama, is situated. Bahrain island accounts for nearly (83%) of the total area of the Kingdom, and linked with Saudi Arabia through the King Fahad Causeway, which was opened in November 1986. Also Bahrain Island is linked to Muharraq Island, the second largest island via bridges and it is also linked to Sitra Peninsula. Among the other big islands is Al-Nabeeh Saleh in the east and Jedah and Om Al-Nasan in the south and the Hawar Islands in the south-east.

## **Demographic Aspects (Population):**

Census in the Kingdom of Bahrain is carried out every ten years, and the first census was initiated in 1941, the latest census was in 2001, which has been relied upon in this report as a basis for data. The following is a summary of the characteristics of the population in terms of the number and geographical distribution, according to age groups and level of education, disability and economic activity.

- The total population in the Kingdom of Bahrain reached (650,604) people, including (450,667) Bahraini and (244,937) non-Bahrainis, which represent 62.4% and 37.4%, respectively (according to 2001 census), as shown in Table No. (1) of the Statistical Annexes.
- The Population increased from the date of the last census, conducted in 1991 (508,037) of the people to (650,604) people in 2001. The annual rate of population growth is 2.7% during the (1991-2001) versus 3.6% in (1981-1991), the rate among Bahraini (2.5% and 2.9%) during those two periods, respectively, as shown in Table (2) of the Statistical Annexes.
- The Kingdom of Bahrain is considered to be one of the most densely populated countries, where it reached 914 people per square kilometer in 2001.

- 50% of the population in the Kingdom concentrated in the areas of Manama and Muharraq and Raffa, where the proportion of the population in these three areas 23.6%, 14.1% and 12.3% respectively, in 2001.
- Percentage of the Bahraini male population 50.44% compared to 49.56% for Bahraini female. With regards to the non-Bahraini population it reached 69% male against 31% females; and 57.4 against 42.6% for the entire population in 2001. The increase of the male population among non-Bahraini is attributed to the fact that the male migrate to the Kingdom of Bahrain seeking work, while their families remain in their home countries.
- The Bahraini society is considered a young one, where the size of population who are less than twenty years of age represent 47.40% (males 48.10% and females 46.80%) from the total population according to 2001 census; while the total population of those who were above fifty years of age represented 9.1%, and this is a result of lower basic death rate of 21.6 per thousand to 20.5 per thousand during the period from 1996-2001 and the decline in the infant mortality rate from 9.5 per thousand to 8.7 per thousand during the same period. As for the non-Bahraini population, their age pyramid contracted; for those who were below twenty years of age and of those who exceeded fifty years to reach, respectively, 6.5% and 16.3%. As shown in Table No. (3) in Statistical Annexes.
- The number of population who are at school age, (i.e. those who are between the ages of 3-17) by the year 2001 census (shown in the table (No. 4) in Statistical Annexes), 177,162 people or 27% of the total population and the proportion of them that male 24% versus 31% for females. Whereby, the largest school-age population are Bahrainis, as they reached 36% compared with 12% of non-Bahrainis.

The pre-primary education (kindergarten) comprises children whose age ranging between three and five years, reached 36,907 children, who represent 20.8% of the total population of school age.

The Primary Stage Education, which extends for six years, is joined by the population whose age are ranging between six to eleven years old, who reached 74,150 people and which represents 41.9% of the total school age population.

The Intermediate Stage Education, which consists of three years, is joined by the population whose age are ranging between twelve and fourteen, and who reached 34,412, which represents 19.4% of the total school age population.

As for the Secondary Stage Education it is also consists of three year, is joined by the population whose age are ranging between fifteen and seventeen years, have reached 31,693 which represents 17.9% % of the total school age population.

- The percentage of illiteracy among the Bahraini population dropped dramatically in the ten years between the 1991 census and 2001. This ratio amounted to 7.5% for males and 17.0 for females and 12.3% for the two types together in 2001. While the illiteracy rate in the corresponding 1991 amounted to 13.3% for males and 28.7% for females and 21.0% for the two together. The table in the section of the fourth goal concerning illiteracy shows the change in the level of illiteracy among Bahrainis for the census years 1981, 1991 and 2001.
- As for the level of education, in 2001 the number of Bahrainis obtaining secondary qualification or above, have reached 121,918 people, of whom 61,794 were males and 60,124 were females; who represent 53.0% of the total grown-up population of those whose age 18 and above (53.7% for males and 52.2% for females), while it reached 66,819 person, of whom 36,433 males and 30,386 females in 19991; an increase of 39.1% of the adult population who are 18 years and older (42.6% for males and 35.6% for females). As shown in Table No. (5) in Statistical Annexes.

In 2001 the number of Bahrainis obtaining first university degrees or above more than 24,760 people, including 13,012 males and 11,748 females, who represent 12.5% of the adult population of those of 22 years of age or older (13.2 % males and 11.8% females), while it reached 11,463 people, of whom 6,682 males and 4,781 females in 1991, at a rate of 7.8% of the total adult population 22 years and older (9.1% of males and 6 .5% for females), where the kingdom's efforts has paid off to double this figure in less than ten years.

- The rate of incidence of disability among Bahrainis is less than 1%, approximately (0.61%). Table (6) in Statistical Annexes shows the total disability among Bahrainis and their relative distribution categories according to age and type of disability in 2001.
- For the active population of working age, the number of people who are economically active (employees and the unemployed) 308,341 of whom 127,121 Bahrainis and 181,220 non-Bahrainis. The number of the Bahraini workers reached 110,987 people in 2001, versus 77,268 individuals in 1991. The rate of employment of Bahraini women reached 23.5% of the total national labour in 2001, versus 17.1% in 19991. The average contribution of Bahraini women 25.6% of the total Bahraini females (15 years and older)

for 2001, while the corresponding rate in 1991 was 18.7%. The unemployment rate among the population (15 years and over) 5.5% (4.1% for males and 10.5% for females) for 2001 compared with 6.3% (5.2% for males and 11.8% for females) for 1991

- As for the population estimates for the years 2002 to 2015, they are shown in Table No. (7) in Statistical Annexes.

## **Non-formal Education:**

The non-formal education includes illiteracy, adult education and continuous education programmes, and it is as follows:

**A. Literacy Programmes:** The study at the literacy programmes and adult education extends for six years of schooling, and are divided on the following stages:

- **Literacy Stage:**

This is regarded an essential stage for those who do not read or write, and the duration of which is for two academic years, in which the Islamic education, Arabic language, Mathematics are taught. It is equivalent to the fourth class of Primary Stage of formal education.

- **Follow-up Stage:**

This stage is equivalent to the sixth grade of the formal education, and the duration of which is also for two academic years, and it is joined by those who obtained the illiteracy completion certificate, and it aims at reinforcing the basic skills learned by students in the illiteracy stage to guarantee no deterioration on skills learned at the illiteracy stage, and upon the completion of this stage, the students receives a completion certificate, which is equivalent to the Sixth Grade Certificate in the formal education system; and in this follow-up stage they Islamic education and Arabic language, mathematics, science, English language, social studies. These are the same assigned subjects that are taught in the formal education at the fifth and sixth grades of primary education; after they were modified to meet the requirements of adult learners.

- **Consolidating Stage:**

This comes after the Follow-up Stage and it is equivalent to the Intermediate Stage of formal education, and is joined by those who have completed the follow-up stage and wish to continue the study or who have dropped out of the formal education for one reason or another. In this stage the same curricula contents is applied as the one which is taught at the third cycle of the basic education, after it is modified to meet the requirements of the students. This to guarantee that the core curricula is covered in two year, rather than in three years, so as to become parallel to the formal education. Six subjects are taught in this stage, and these are: Islamic education, Arabic language, English language, Mathematics, Science, Social studies (History and Geography).

**B.**

**C.**

**D. : Continuing Education Programmes:**

The Directorate of Continuing Education organizes many programmes for adults, include: living languages, and specialized courses to raise the professionalism and technical and educational and specialized courses to raise the professional competence of teachers of kindergartens.

**Literacy:**

The Kingdom of Bahrain deals with the subject of illiteracy within the integrated vision based on the eradication of all forms of ignorance and illiteracy and provides illiteracy and continuing education services; and stresses the importance of this task that the Kingdom of Bahrain deals with this service in the same way it deals with any other services which are provided free of charge to the Bahraini citizens, as it aims at not only getting rid of illiteracy which is represented on the lack of the abilities of only writing and reading, but to immunize the individual against the consequences of illiteracy excreta by the social environment within which he/she lives and helps to enroll in a stimulating knowledge environment; and taking part in the growth taking place within the Bahraini community, taking advantage of the improving socio-economic conditions.

The change of the Directorate of Adult Education's name in the Ministry of Education to the Directorate of Continuing Education in the year 2005, is clearly reflecting the shift in the required change in the next stage in the development of the Bahraini community service and contributing effectively to boost development, reflecting the importance of the results achieved in recent years to reduce the level of illiteracy.

**National Action Plan and Program for Literacy:**

The Ministry of Education is mainly undertaking the task in developing plans and programmes for literacy and adult education in coordination with the various sectors in the Kingdom. The Ministry of Education plan in the area of literacy is based on the general directions which include the following basic elements:

- Emphasizing on the principle of partnership between the public and private sectors and civil institutions with respect to literacy and adult education, through coordination between those sectors and institutions and the Ministry of Education.

- Updating literacy programmes and adult education at the Ministry of Education to be appropriate and in line with the requirements of the era, and emphasizes the key skills required by the individual, and enable self-learning skills.
- Linking literacy programmes and adult education in the Ministry of Education to the development plans, and the technological developments taking place and in the working mechanisms.

In the light of the main objective in this area, which is represented in achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, the Kingdom of Bahrain took the following steps:

- Identifying the numbers of the illiterate people in cooperation with the Central Information Organization.
- Identifying the number of students at the end of the literacy stage among the different age groups, with particular emphasis on the targeted age group of literacy programmes (10-44 years).
- Cooperating with the cultural clubs and the national charity funds for the working to raise public awareness of the importance of literacy and implementing programmes for the targeted groups.
- Ensuring equal learning opportunity in basic and continuing education.
- Preventing deterioration among the illiterate students through the provision of programmes within the continuing education.
- Preparing adult students to meet the demands of the labor market and engage them in the social activities.

The Ministry of Education has put the procedures and the programmes to achieve this goal in cooperation and coordination with the various parties, in the following way:

- Re-building literacy and adult education programmes and developing a comprehensive and integrated change to the objectives and content, methods and strategies and evaluation, so to conform to the requirements of the age and needs of students.
- Building educational programmes and curricula for continuing education, in such a way that encourages the learner to continue learning, researching, and surveying, using multi-media and a variety of skills to deal with the different computer programmes to access to the required information, with emphasis on the concept of

promoting cultural aspect in Adult Education, which aims at increasing cultural knowledge of the others.

- Setting special standards for the selection of teachers working in adult education and emphasizing on their training on the mechanism of programmes development, implementation, evaluation, and modification if required.
- Activating the role of adult education in the community so that to carry out complementary functions and compensating those who dropped out or were dismissed for various reasons from formal education, especially the working students.
- Facilitating the use of the modern technology in education to serve the adult education to be more dynamic and modernizing methods which will reflect positively on the entrance and modalities for the implementation of its programmes with an emphasis on self-directed learning.

### **Partnerships and Inter-Ministerial Relationships in Planning and Implementation of Literacy:**

In addition to what has been achieved at the official level in the field of literacy and adult education, there are civil efforts in the field of literacy activities, which supports the official efforts in several areas. The participation of women's associations, clubs and national professional associations, social centers, schools and universities in raising awareness for literacy programmes and working towards providing morning literacy programmes parallel to the evening ones, to act as alternative for those who cannot attend the evening system, and the involvement of the private sector with an agreement of the Ministry of Education and other ministries and some national companies in organizing literacy programmes for their employees during working hours, with paid salary, in addition to providing concrete incentives for those who succeed in the literacy programmes.

### **Implementation towards Achieving the Goal of Literacy:**

#### **Legislations and Legal Framework:**

One of the most prominent manifestations of ensuring education for all in the Constitution is guaranteeing the right of education, as stated in Article Seven, paragraph (a) of the Constitution states that:

*"The State sponsors the sciences, humanities and the arts, and encourages scientific research. The State also guarantees educational and cultural services to its citizens. Education is compulsory and free in the early stages as specified and provided by law. **The necessary plan to combat illiteracy is laid down by law.**"*

Based on what is stated in the Constitution on the elimination of illiteracy, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Education Act of 2005, which states for the compulsory of basic education to those who are in the age of six, until the person attain the age of fifteen, and this is considered one of the measures to eradicate illiteracy in the country. As Article Nine of the Act No. 27 of 2005 on education, states that:

***"Literacy and Adult Education is a national responsibility which aims at upgrading its citizens culturally, socially and professionally, and the Ministry plans to eradicate illiteracy."***

At the international level, the participation of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the Fifth World Conference on Adult Education held in Hamburg (Germany) in 1997 and the Education For All Conference held in Dakar (Senegal) in 2000, as well as adopting the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations No. 122 / 54 concerning the World Literacy and Adult Education Decade, issued in Geneva in 2000, which determines to specify a decade to eradicate illiteracy in the period from January 2003 until 2012, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), all these are clear indication of the commitment of the Kingdom of Bahrain to what came in the resolution. This is in addition to the participation of the Ministry of Education in the international and regional conferences held in this area, such as Education Conference, which was held in New York in 2006, and the Challenges of Literacy in the Arab Region, held in Doha, Qatar in 2007.

### **Governance and Supervision:**

According to Decree No. (53) of 2005, issued on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005 on the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education, and Decree No. (29) of 2006 issued on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2006 on the reorganization of the Ministry of Education, the Directorate of Adult Education renamed to the Directorate of Continuing Education, This directorate with its two sections (Literacy section and Continuous education section) considered as the administrative body in charge of organizing and implementing adult education programmes below the literacy level and continuing education, including the following:

- Proposing literacy and adult education programmes and developing implementations mechanisms.
- Supervising literacy and adult education centers.
- Studying the requirements for literacy and adult education programmes and specifying goals, the curriculum and the number of the centers and their geographical distribution and the manpower needed.

- Identifying the training programmes for workers in the field of literacy and adult education.
- Disseminating media awareness of the importance of eradicating illiteracy and building partnerships in this area.

### **Services and Incentives Provided for Learners in Literacy Programmes:**

The Ministry of Education took several measures which helped regulating learners attendance and the alleviation of the two problems, namely dropout and unwillingness in which reduce the illiteracy rate among the population. Some of the actions taken are:

- Opening-morning classes for women who could not attend the evening program which has helped to reduce the sizes and dropout rates among them.
- Providing transportation for learners, especially women.
- Providing kindergartens in most centers to care for the children of the learners and teaching them during the official timing of the centers. This humanistic and civilized action was taken to solve one of the problems leading to the learners' dropout, as they were not able to leave their children unattended for a long time; and this project has greatly increased enrollment rate and helped women to continue their education.
- Giving grants for those who were successful in intermediate schools to enroll in continuing education courses in various fields.
- Honoring the older learner from the literacy stage on the Education Day, as well as honoring those who completed their studies and managed to have their university degree.
- Granting concrete incentives for the workers who were illiterate in the official or semi-official institutions who became literate through the morning programmes that are held during office hours at those institutions.
- Exempting adult learners at all academic levels who have succeeded in any subject for taking it for the second time.
- Awarding academic certificate for those who know how to read and write, who did not previously attend any educational institution after passing level identification examination aiming at facilitating the entry into the educational centers and continue their education.
- Reducing the study to four years in the (literacy stage) and beyond (follow-up) for adults instead of six in the first and the second cycle of the basic education which are equal to literacy education and beyond.

- Allowing learners to study one or more of the content subjects at post literacy stages, upon the desire of the learner of not having a certificate.

### **Capacity-Building programmes:**

The preparation of literacy's teachers depends on special teaching methods suitable for each subject. In their preparation, they receive intensive training which consists of theoretical and practical parts. Moreover, the trainees are being followed up by the subject supervisors, where they visit them in their classes, monitor their performance and write technical reports on their teaching methods for adult learners.

The Ministry of Education is very concerned to develop teachers professionally who are teaching the literacy classes; it provides training programmes which aim at upgrading teachers in a number of subjects, including the proper reading of the Holy Quran, in addition to the preparation and implementation of workshops for teachers to build an easy method for teaching the alphabet, and workshops for Geography and Science subjects teachers to develop their professional skills.

### **Performance Indicators towards Achieving the Goal of Literacy:**

#### **Quantitative indicators**

The most recent illiteracy data in the Kingdom of Bahrain is the data obtained in the General Census of Population in 2001, which indicates that the illiteracy rate among the population has declined dramatically during the twenty-year between Census 1981 and 2001, as the result of the educational efforts, as shown in the following table:

<b>Table (33)</b>						
<b>Change in the Illiteracy Level among the Bahrainis: 1981 - 2001</b>						
Year	No. of Illiterates (15 years and above)			% of Illiteracy (15 years and above)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	17709	33486	51195	25.2%	48.1%	36.6%
1991	12707	27438	40145	13.3%	28.7%	21.0%
2001	9684	21885	31569	7.5%	17.0%	12.3%

Source: Central Informatics Organization, Directorate of Statistics, Kingdom of Bahrain

The following analysis of the most important quantitative indicators in the area of literacy:

- **Adult Literacy Rate (15 years old and above):**

The following table shows that the overall adult literacy rate among Bahrainis (15 years old and above) males and females in 2001 is (87.7%) and the rate among males (92.5%), while it is (83%) among females in the same year.

<b>Table (34)</b>			
<b>Literacy Rate (15 years old and above) by Nationality and Sex: 2001</b>			
Sex	Bahraini	Non-Bahraini	Total
Male	92.5%	85.2%	88.6%
Female	83.0%	84.8%	83.6%
Total	87.7%	85.1%	86.5%

Source: Central Informatics Organization, Directorate of Statistics, Kingdom of Bahrain

These data indicate that literacy rate had improved significantly, as it was (79%) in 1991 compared to (87.7%) in 2001, and there is an improvement in the female literacy rate (15+ years old) from (71.3%) in 1991 to (83%) in 2001.

This improvement in the literacy rate was the result of enormous efforts by the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain to upgrade this rate as a priority in the educational project of the Kingdom of Bahrain as the Kingdom aims to achieve the highest literacy rates in the next census (2011), as the result of the implementation of the compulsory education law.

This improvement also indicates the effectiveness of the primary education and adult literacy programmes, which can enable a high percentage of the population to acquire the ability to use the written word (carry out a simple arithmetic processes) in their daily lives.

Looking at the absolute numbers of those who do not read (15 years old and above) in 2001 in view of the improvement of literacy rates may coincide with the increase in the numbers of illiterate population as the result of the demographic changes. The number of those who could not read (15 years old and above) is around (31569) illiterate, of whom (69%) were female. Despite the decline in this number from the year 1991 (40145) of whom 68% are female, but it has been a great concern to the government, and thus required the development of plans and programmes to reach the goal by the year 2015 and is expected to build on previous indications that this rate has largely declined during the period from 2001 to 2007.

- **Adult Literacy Rate (age group 10-44 years old):**

The Kingdom of Bahrain has adopted a much broader standard in determining the target group of literacy (10-44) years old, instead of the category (15-44) year old, which is

internationally approved, that the number reached (6436) illiterate of this segment, as shown by 2001 census, which aim at finding measures to include this segment to the regular schools; as if neglected, they will join the illiterate segment in the future.

The table below shows the illiteracy rate among Bahrainis of the target age group (10-44) years old reached (1.4%) males, (4%) females and (2.7%) for both sexes in 2001, compared to (2.4) for males, (10.5%) females and (6.4%) for both sexes in 1991 indicating a decline at a lower level.

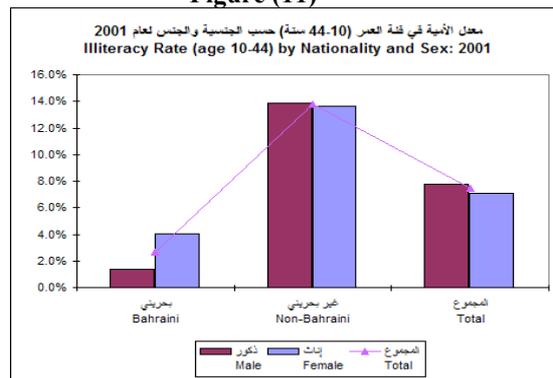
As for the age group (15-44) years old the number of illiterates, according to the census of 2001 for both sexes (6306) including (1523) males and (4783) female at the rate of (2.22%) for both sexes, and (1.56%) for males and (4.88%) for females.

The following table shows the adult literacy rate among the population in the age group (10-44) years old by nationality and sex in 2001.

Table (35)			
Literacy Rate (age 10 – 44 years old) by Nationality and Sex: 2001			
Sex	Bahraini	Non-Bahraini	Total
Male	98.6%	86.1%	92.2%
Female	96.0%	86.4%	92.9%
Total	97.3%	86.2%	92.5%

Source: Central Informatics Organization, Directorate of Statistics, Kingdom of Bahrain

Figure (11)



- Youth Literacy Rate (age group 15-24 years old):**

The following table shows that Bahraini's literacy rate in the age group (15-24) was (99.3%) of both sexes, (99.2%) for males and (99.3%) for females. It indicates that this rate has slightly improved from the year 1991, where it (98.6%) o of both sexes.

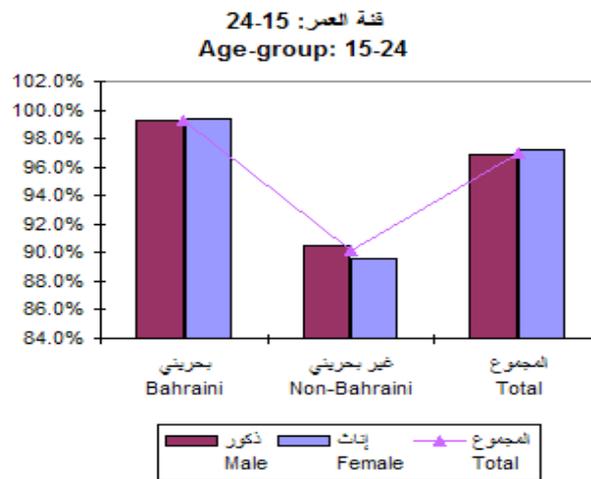
The high rate of literacy in the age group (15-24) years indicate the high level of participation

and remaining in the primary education, and on the effectiveness of education in teaching basic skills in reading and writing. Since the gross and net enrollment rates as well as the survival rate in primary education reflected the literacy rate for this category of age group.

Table (36)			
Youth Literacy Rate (age 15 – 24 years old) by Nationality and Sex: 2001			
Sex	Bahraini	Non-Bahraini	Total
Male	99.2%	90.5%	96.8%
Female	99.3%	89.6%	97.3%
Total	99.3%	90.1%	97.0%

Source: Central Informatics Organization, Directorate of Statistics, Kingdom of Bahrain

Figure (12)



- Number of Literacy and Adult Education Centers, Classrooms, Learners and Teachers:**

The following table shows the number of literacy centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which reached (29) centers according to the statistics of the academic year 2005/2006 spread all over all the five governances of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The learners/classroom ratio in these centers reached (17), and the learners/teacher ratio reached (11). Those two ratios have positive impact, as it offers better conditions inside the classroom on one hand, and gives teachers an opportunity to interact with a small number of learners on the other. The negative impact has to do with the increasing cost, in terms of the number of teachers needed for the classrooms. This indicator helps to reconsider when planning for the need of teachers, classrooms and therefore the required centers.

Table (37)			
Number of Adult Literacy Centers, Classrooms, Teachers and Learners by Sex: 2005/2006			
Data	Total	Male	Female
No. of Centers	29	15	14
No. of Classrooms	139	68	71
No. of Teachers	216	104	112
No. of Learners	2392	1451	941
Learners/Class Ratio	17	21	13
Learners/Teacher Ratio	11	14	8

Source: Educational Statistics Section, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain

• **The Number of Learners Participating in Literacy Programs:**

The following data shows the number of students in literacy and adult education programmes by programmes; which indicate that the largest group join the Consolidating stage, as the result of the enrollment of dismissed and dropouts students from the Intermediate Stage, which provide them with an opportunity to return to formal education after successfully completing the study at this stage.

It also clearly shows the relationship and integration of literacy and adult education programmes with the formal education, where the public and private education accommodate all primary school children and they complete it up to the end of sixth grade, and therefore a child is able to learn reading, writing and arithmetic.

Table (38)								
Number of Adult Literacy Learners by Programmes and Sex: 2001/2002 – 2005/2006								
Academic Year	Sex	Literacy Stage Learners		Follow-up Stage Learners		Consolidating Stage Learners		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2001/2002	Total	1158	26.2%	731	16.5%	2538	57.3%	4427
	Male	288	11.3%	379	14.8%	1891	73.9%	2558
	Female	870	46.5%	352	18.8%	647	34.6%	1869
2005/2006	Total	491	20.5%	396	16.6%	1505	62.9%	2392
	Male	89	6.1%	190	13.1%	1172	80.8%	1451
	Female	402	42.7%	206	21.9%	333	35.4%	941

Source: Educational Statistics Section, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain

Within the framework of integration, the children who were outside primary schools were absorbed, in adult education centers – all of whom were girls - with a view to turn them after

the end of literacy stage to the Primary Stage of formal education to prevent them from going back to illiteracy. Also, a number of young adult learners of age (10 - 14) years old who were outside the formal schools were absorbed in morning classes, which were opened in the Primary schools; where the school principals granted the authority to transfer these children to higher grades, on condition that they study for not less than four years in Primary Stage. Moreover, those adults who were of the same school age, and who were forced by certain circumstances to leave school, can join the same class which they dropped, but to sit for standard identification examination.

Out of the integration and coordination between the formal and adult education, the dismissed students, due to their failure from Primary Stage can join the literacy programmes, in the parallel classes to the ones they were dismissed from. In addition, the adult education system provided clear and encouraging facilities to accept the follow-up stage in the Consolidating stage and to accept dropouts and those who were dismissed of the third cycle (Intermediate) in this stage, and granting them equivalency certificate which allows the holder to join the secondary tracks on the two routes: the first to join the formal secondary education if his/her age has not exceeded 23 years old, the second one is to study at home and to attend the evening classes organized by the secondary schools.

### **Qualitative Indicators**

The Ministry of Education has become aware of the importance of providing programmes to meet certain technical requirements and the life of the learners, and to help them to adapt to the events and situations they face daily in their lives. From this standpoint the Ministry had put several programmes at different times serving different segments of the adult to meet their educational requirements, in order to cope with this era. These changes came in the form of educational projects and learning and training programmes.

The Ministry also achieved many accomplishments in the field of adult education since 2001, notably the most significant were the development of the management structure from Literacy and Adult Education Directorate to the Directorate of Continuing Education to a broader framework since 2005. And since the approval of the Council of Ministers of the developmental vision of education on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2003 emerged trends discerned literacy in the context of basic education for adults, as the plan emphasized: *"The importance of building bridges and opening channels between formal and non-formal education, and recognizing the teaching methods and curricula of adult education and issuing equivalent certificates to those of formal education."*

From this point of view the Ministry of Education made non-formal parallel to formal education, and opened channels between them, governed by flexible rules and regulations, which made it more responsive to the need of the learners, and enhanced recognition of its certificates to be equivalent to those at the formal education of all its stages, which enhances the changes of self-learning among adults and encourages them to continue studying.

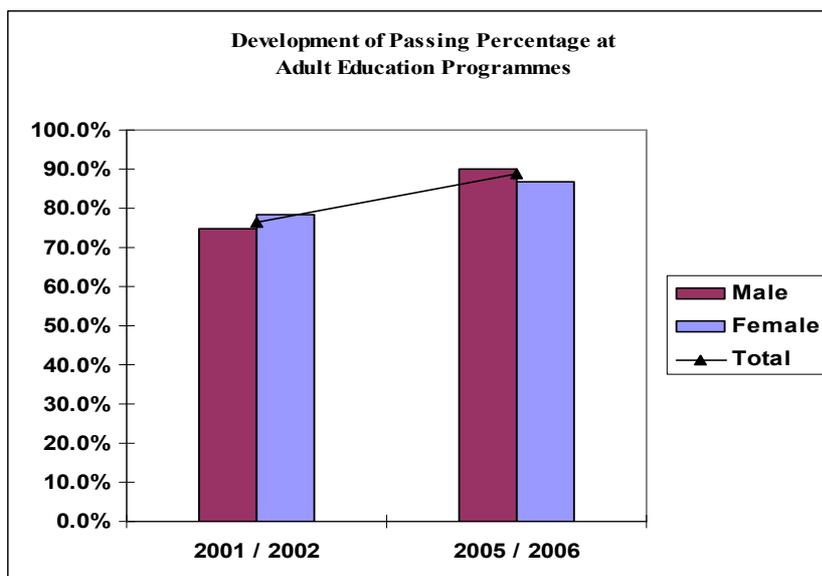
• **Passing Percentages in Adult Literacy Programmes:**

It can be noticed from the following table that there is a development in the rates of success among the applicants for examinations, which were in the academic year 2001/2002 (76.5%) and then became (88.8%) in the academic year 2005/2006. As the table shows that the gender parity index in favor of males in 2005/2006 while it was in favor of females in 2001/2002.

Table (39)									
Number of Passing and Passing Percentages in Adult Literacy Programmes by Stage and Sex 2001/2002 – 2005/2006									
Academic Year	Data	Literacy Stage Learners		Follow-up Stage Learners		Consolidating Stage Learners		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2001/2002	Total	539	70.7%	387	74.6%	1442	79.4%	2368	76.5%
	Male	108	67.9%	178	69.3%	1008	76.7%	1294	74.8%
	Female	431	71.5%	209	79.8%	434	86.5%	1073	78.6%
2005/2006	Total	284	78.9%	238	93.0%	1076	90.9%	1598	88.8%
	Male	50	86.2%	91	90.1%	831	90.2%	972	90.9%
	Female	234	77.5%	147	94.8%	245	93.2%	626	86.9%

Source: Educational Statistics Section, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain

Figure (13)



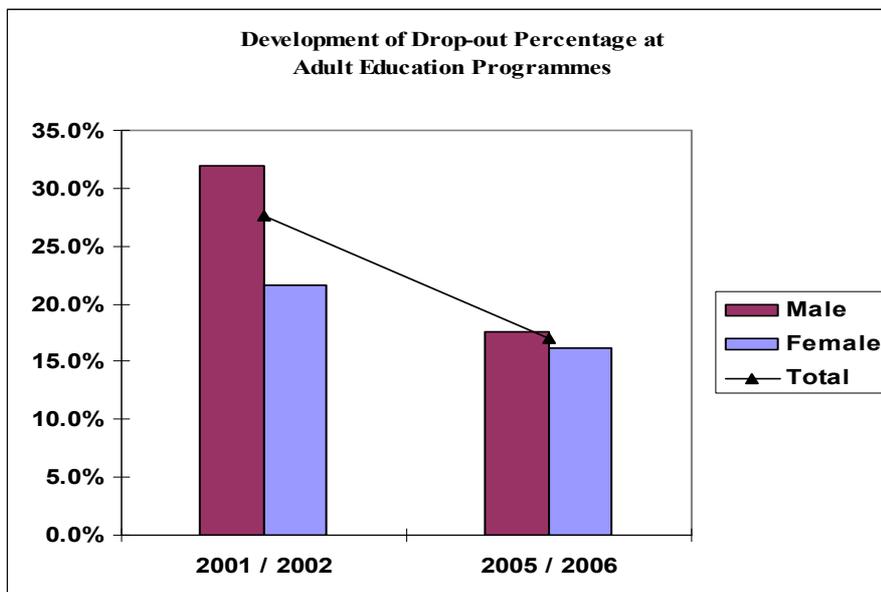
• **Dropout Rates at Adult Literacy Programmes:**

The following table shows that there is a decrease in dropout rates among the total participants in adult literacy programmes, where in the academic year 2001/2002 was (27.6%) became (17.0%) in the academic year 2005/2006. As the table shows that the proportion of dropouts among females is less than males, which indicates the need to create incentives for the continuation of the males in the programmes.

Table (40)									
Number and Percentage of Drop-outs at Adult Literacy Programmes by Stage and Sex: 2001/2002 – 2005/2006									
Academic Year	Data	Literacy Stage Dropouts		Follow-up Stage Dropouts		Consolidating Stage Dropouts		Total Dropouts	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2001/2002	Total	333	28.8%	193	26.4%	696	27.4%	1222	27.6%
	Male	120	41.7%	122	32.2%	576	30.5%	818	32.0%
	Female	213	24.5%	71	20.2%	120	18.5%	404	21.6%
2005/2006	Total	84	17.1%	86	21.7%	237	15.7%	407	17.0%
	Male	22	24.7%	47	24.7%	186	15.9%	255	17.5%
	Female	62	15.4%	39	18.9%	51	15.3%	52	16.2%

Source: Educational Statistics Section, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain

Figure (14)



Confirming to providing better educational opportunities for adult learners, sought by the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of services provided to this group to facilitate their participation in literacy classes, efforts were put on eradicating illiteracy of the remained category of the citizens, and among these efforts are:

- Developing methods of adult literacy in the light of specific national goals, based on the needs of learners and the requirements of literacy and of the alphabet civilization.
- Writing the Arabic language and Mathematics textbooks for the Literacy and Follow-up Stages, in the light of the developed curricula objectives.
- Preparing a suitable evaluation system, this takes into account the educational attainment of adults.
- Offering a literacy alphabet programme in a limited period of time (accelerated literacy project) in the form of training courses, rely on self-learning method for old student and encouraging him/her to take advantage of his own self learning strategies, this is an attempt to provide more easier educational opportunities for the largest category of adult learners.
- Developing appropriate teaching methods for adult literacy programmes, according to the technical requirements of modern knowledge which the Ministry of Education has initiated by adopting a programme of family culture for women, for the post-literacy to educate Bahraini women, who surpassed the alphabet and the problems need to become culturally functional and to be able to cope with the social and economic situation evolving in the country and the developing her capabilities to bear a varied life patterns and functions.
- Presenting a new methodology in the way the alphabet skills in the literacy programmes which integrates the family culture and their life experiences, so to enable them to find out the changes and then to work towards achieving it.
- Introducing computers in the adult education programmes, especially for boys and girls students who have been dismissed from the formal education because of the recurrence of failing two consecutive years in intermediate school, in the view of eradicating their illiteracy and motivating them to continue their studies.
- Giving opportunities for learners (males and females) to study, in the morning, at the learning resources centers in schools, which act as learning centers for adult education in the evening, with a view to strengthening educational programmes and to

encourage the illiterate and the adult learners to continue studying and not to drop or stop studying.

## **Best Practices in Policies, Programmes and Activities:**

### **Policies:**

The Ministry of Education began new and fresh start towards preserving the gains by introducing new programmes that support lifelong learning, and move to the other side to promote adult education. The Ministry of Education based its policy on the philosophy derived from the educational concept of continuing education, which aims in its educational dimension to enable the learner to achieve self esteem and enriching his/her life.

### **Programmes and Activities:**

The Ministry of Education sponsored many programmes and projects which aimed at achieving qualitative development in the area of literacy and adult education, and these programs and projects include:

- **New Methodology for Building Literacy for the Category Who were Freed from Illiteracy:**

This project depends on the discovery of writing capacity of those who become literate, and working with them on drafting their writing matters, so to be published in the written media. This project started in the academic year 2005-2006 by training leaders of trainers, who have the skills of settling this kind of training in continuing education centers.

- **Computer Literacy Programme:**

The Ministry of Education, presented this programme for the regular learners in the continuing education programmes, aimed at the eradication of technology illiteracy and access to technological skills essential so to be able to cope with different means of education and prepare them to meet the requirements of the labor market. Under computer literacy, an expansion in the application of the project took place so that it includes the three phases (Literacy- Follow-up and Consolidating) from the beginning of the academic year 2005/2006.

- **Eradication of Alphabet Literacy for the Formal School Student's Mothers:**

This project contributes to reducing the illiteracy rate to 50%, of the current rate, according to 2001 Census, and the empowerment of women by possess the basic skills of reading, writing, Mathematics and to assist them to integrate more in development programmes.

- **Inter-Related Subjects Programmes:**

This programme aims to integrate the basic learning skills in Arabic language and Mathematics with family education in an attempt to employ these skills more effectively to serve the needs of this category of learners. A pilot implementation lasted for two years (2000/2001 to 2001/2002). This programme was well planned, in which the study units were distributed on the orderly modules of the actual school days with the required raw materials and means of implementation as possible. It is only intended for female students at the illiteracy stage only.

The objective of this pilot implementation was positive, and helped greatly in reducing the dropout rate during the two years. Some registration indicators showed the capacity of the programme to attract some illiterate students.

- **Developing Teaching Methodology in the Literacy Stage:**

This project aims to attract the largest number of learners of age group (10-44 years old) to join literacy programmes and reduce dropout rates in the continuing education centers, and shorten the study period for adult learners to be able to complete their study in a short time, which sequentially reduce the cost, and diversification of teaching methods which caters for individual differences.

- **The Proper Recitation of the Holy Qur'an for Literacy Stage:**

This project aims to strengthen the mechanism for proper recitation (reading) of the Holy Qur'an verses, and encouraging learners to continue learning, so to reduce the dropout rates.

- **Arabic Language for Non-Arab:**

This program aims to provide educational services according to the learner's need, as some foreigners want to learn the Arabic language for the purposes of handling and integration in the local community. The programme have been planned in the form of modules which put the learners in life situations, from which they learn the language and the vocabulary needed in those situations, depending on role playing, and the drawing of essential written symbols.

### **Remaining Challenges:**

Although the Kingdom of Bahrain achieved positive steps towards the elimination of illiteracy, there is still some challenges to be faced and are focused on the following:

- There is a refrain to enroll in the continuing education, despite of providing all the facilities and the premises, including the provision of transportation and kindergartens for the learners' children and the honoring of the State on the Education Day for the high achievers of the graduates from the Literary and Follow-up stages.
- The diversity of the wide illiterate's audience, in terms of the non-cognitive variables, such as sex, age, previous educational experience, profession, marital status, economic situation and punctuality.
- Diversity of categories and levels of teachers, where a large percentage of these teachers have educational background in formal education of the young, but they lack adequate professional preparation for teaching adults learners; so the Ministry of Education sought to address this situation by organizing training programmes for teachers and familiarizing them with adults characteristics and the requirements of teaching this group of people.
- The absorption of the continuing education centers of learners of various ages and backgrounds, which affects the ability of students to achieve an effective communication between them, and responding their interests and preferences and to their different needs.

### **Future Action Plan for Literacy:**

Part of the project of the comprehensive evaluation of the quality of education undertaken by the Ministry of Education in 2005 in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the International Institute for Educational Planning of the UNESCO (UNESCO/IIEP) in Paris, the literacy and continuing education programmes were evaluated. The report which was issued in June 2005 gave number of recommendations for the future guidance, focused on improving the quality of adult education, and the most outstanding issues are:

- Building adult education curriculum based on the actual needs and catering for the benefits of the institutions, and to be able to give students the skills, knowledge and trends useful in their daily lives.
- Diversifying the programmes and curricula, and gearing them towards the learner's needs, as well as diversifying the groups joined adult education.
- Employing modern teaching methods and techniques in education.
- Developing adults and continuing education programmes evaluation methods.

- Moving from the low order of competencies which they do not go beyond memorization and retrieval of information and comprehension questions in the examinations to higher levels.
- Ensuring professional development training for those working in adult education.
- Developing adult education teachers' competencies so to be able to address adult learners' needs and to equip them with self-learning and self-evaluation techniques, as well as develop their desire to continue learning.
- Strengthening the link between adult education and the needs of the labor market.

Accordingly, the Kingdom of Bahrain seeks in its future plans to strengthen programmes in the area of literacy to achieve the level of civilization and functional literacy, and the relentless pursuit to eradicate the illiteracy, and to ensure no deterioration happen to those who succeeded in literacy programmes, and will be done through an ongoing programme based on the following:

**First: the quantitative aspect:**

- Finding out the illiterate numbers with the cooperation of the Central Informatics organization, in order to accommodate them in literacy programmes and adult education.
- Coordinating and cooperating with the cultural clubs and charitable funds to work on raising people awareness of the importance of literacy, and the opening of literacy in some civil society institutions.
- Continuing coordination and integration with formal education in terms of transferring learners from the non-formal education to formal education, and accepting the learners who are studying at the other stages in the regular education in accordance with the transfer procedures and regulations in all stages; and following up the dismissed students due to recurrence failing in two or more subjects in formal education, and the programmes of those promoted to the next class with a subject to be completed from the previous class.

**Second: the qualitative aspect:**

- Developing curricula according to students' needs.
- Evaluating textbooks.
- Training teachers and supervisors of the educational process.
- Following-up and evaluating and developing the programmes and the projects, such as the newly introduced ones: the interrelated subjects, Arabic language programme

for the non-Arab speakers, the literacy draft of teaching the school children's mothers, the proper recitation (reading) of the Holy Qur'an, computer literacy programme, the project of building a new methodology for readability for post-literacy stage.

- Evaluating institutional performance of the learning centers, through building and implementing standards for evaluation.